

CLAIMS in Serial No. 07/579,569

1. An arrangement comprising:
- a source providing an alternating voltage across a pair of source terminals; the alternating voltage having a fundamental frequency;
  - a series-combination of an inductor and a capacitor; the series-combination being: (i) naturally resonant at or near said fundamental frequency, (ii) effectively connected across the source terminals, thereby to draw a source current from the source terminals, and (iii) connected in circuit with a pair of output terminals across which is provided an output voltage; the inductor means being coupled with an auxiliary winding, thereby to cause an auxiliary voltage to be provided from this auxiliary winding; and
  - a gas discharge lamp means having a pair of cathode terminals connected with the auxiliary winding by way of a connect means.
2. The arrangement of claim 1 wherein the coupling between the inductor and the auxiliary winding is sufficiently loose so that, in case an electrical short circuit were to be placed across the auxiliary winding, the magnitude of the source current would be prevented from increasing to a detrimentally high level.
3. The arrangement of claim 1 wherein the coupling between the inductor and the auxiliary winding is sufficiently loose so that, in case an electrical short circuit were to be placed across the auxiliary winding, the inductance represented by the inductor would not decrease by more than half.
4. The arrangement of claim 1 wherein the connect means includes resistor means.
5. The arrangement of claim 4 wherein the resistor means is a non-linear resistor means.
6. The arrangement of claim 4 wherein the resistor means includes an incandescent filament means.
7. The arrangement of claim 1 wherein the connect means includes limiting means operative to manifestly limit to a pre-established level the magnitude of any current drawn from the auxiliary winding.

8. The arrangement of claim 1 wherein the source includes frequency-converting power supply means operative to be powered from the power line voltage of an ordinary electric utility power line and to provide said alternating voltage; the fundamental frequency of the alternating voltage being substantially higher than that of the power line voltage.

9. The arrangement of claim 1 wherein the magnitude of the source current is an inverse function of the magnitude of the inductance of the inductor.

10. The arrangement of claim 1 wherein the series-combination is naturally resonant at a frequency lower than said fundamental frequency.

11. An arrangement comprising:

a source of power line voltage;

rectifier means connected with the source and operative to provide a DC voltage at a set of DC terminals;

inverter means connected with the DC terminals and operative to provide an AC voltage across a pair of inverter terminals;

an LC circuit having a tank inductor connected with a tank capacitor; the LC circuit being: (i) connected in circuit with the inverter terminals, (ii) tuned to natural resonance at a frequency lower than the fundamental frequency of the AC voltage, (iii) operative to draw an inverter current from the inverter terminals, and (iv) connected in circuit with a pair of output terminals across which is provided an output voltage; the inductor means having a main winding and an auxiliary winding coupled therewith; and auxiliary voltage being provided by the auxiliary winding; and

a gas discharge lamp means having a pair of cathode terminals connected with the auxiliary winding.

12. The arrangement of claim 11 wherein the main winding: (i) has an inductance of a first magnitude when measured at times when no current is flowing in the auxiliary winding; (ii) has an inductance of a second magnitude when a short circuit is present across the auxiliary winding; and (iii) the second magnitude is at least half of the first magnitude.

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19. An arrangement comprising:

inverter means connected with a source of DC voltage an operative to supply an AC voltage at an inverter output;

an L-C circuit having an inductor means and a capacitor means; the L-C circuit: (i) being connected in circuit with the inverter output, (ii) having a natural resonance frequency not higher than the fundamental frequency of the AC voltage, and (iii) having a set of output terminals at which is provided an output voltage; the inductor means having a main winding and at least one auxiliary winding magnetically coupled with the main winding; the at least one auxiliary winding having a pair of auxiliary terminals across which is provided an auxiliary voltage; and

gas discharge lamp means having lamp terminals connected in circuit with the output terminals; the gas discharge lamp means having at least one thermionic cathode having a pair of cathode terminals connected with the auxiliary terminals;

whereby the thermionic cathode is provided with cathode heating power from the auxiliary winding.

20. The arrangement of claim 19 wherein: (i) the inverter output includes a pair of inverter output terminals; and (ii) the inductor means and the capacitor means are in effect series-connected across the inverter output terminals.

21. The arrangement of claim 19 wherein the waveform of the AC voltage is substantially different from the waveform of the output voltage.

22. The arrangement of claim 19 wherein: (i) the AC voltage has a non-sinusoidal waveform; and (ii) the current flowing through the inductor has a substantially sinusoidal waveform.

23. The arrangement of claim 19 wherein: (i) the AC voltage has a non-sinusoidal waveform while the output voltage has a substantially sinusoidal waveform.

24. The arrangement of claim 19 wherein: (i) the output voltage has an RMS magnitude; (ii) the gas discharge lamp may be disconnected from the output terminals; and (iii) the RMS magnitude is substantially lower when the gas discharge lamp is connected with the output terminals as compared to when it is not so connected.